What is Genetic Counseling?

Genetic counseling involves evaluation of a family or individual's heredity. It is used for many purposes such as confirming, diagnosing or ruling out a genetic condition, and calculating possible risks.

How Genetic Counselors Can Help.

Genetic counselors are health professionals that provide nondirective counseling and information to families who have members with genetic conditions or who may be at risk for a variety of inherited diseases.

They can:
- Obtain a family history
- Interpret medical records
- Analyze inheritance patterns
- Determine risks of recurrence for a vast number of genetic conditions
- Discuss possible treatments/options
- Provide support

Reasons for Seeking Genetic Consultation:

Adults/Adolescents/Prenatal:

- Family history of:
  1. Known or suspected genetic conditions.
  2. Chromosomal abnormality.
  3. Hereditary cancers.
  4. Mental health problems.

5. Risk assessment for pregnancy planning.
6. Blindness or deafness.

Pediatric:

- Family history of known or suspected:
  1. Genetic disorder
  2. Blindness or deafness.
  3. Birth defect

5. Mental retardation or developmental delay.
7. Screening results.
8. Major malformations.
Testing Available...

1) Diagnostic: Used to confirm or rule out a suspected genetic disorder.
2) Carrier: Used to identify those who have inherited a gene mutation for a disorder inherited in a certain genetic disorder, so treatment can be started early.
3) Prenatal: Performed during a pregnancy to assess the health status of a fetus.

You and your partner may be especially interested in genetic counseling if:
- You or your partner are planning to have another pregnancy or planning to be after the age of 35.
- You and your partner are close relatives and have a history of having genetic disorders in your family.
- You have had multiple miscarriages.
- You have a history of having genetic disorders in your family.
- You are concerned about genetic defects that occur more frequently in your ethnic group.

Locations in NC for Genetic Counseling:

- ASHEVILLE
  - Pisgah Regional Medical Center
  - (828) 292-3333
- CHAPEL HILL
  - UNC Medical Genetics Center
  - (919) 966-2222
- CHARLOTTE
  - Carolinas Medical Center
  - (704) 355-3199
- DURHAM
  - Duke University Medical Center
  - (919) 684-3034
- GREENSBORO
  - Medical University of South Carolina
  - (803) 738-5721
- RALEIGH
  - Duke University Medical Center
  - (252) 816-2323
- RALEIGH
  - Wake Forest University School of Medicine
  - (336) 716-2113
- WINSTON-SALEM
  - Wake Forest University School of Medicine
  - (336) 716-2113

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